

Lake Oroville

State Recreation Area



Our Mission

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

GRAY DAVIS
Governor

MARY D. NICHOLS
Secretary for Resources

RUTH COLEMAN
Acting Director, California State Parks



California State Parks does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. Prior to arrival, visitors with disabilities who need assistance should contact the park at the phone number below. To receive this publication in an alternate format, write to the Communications Office at the following address.

CALIFORNIA	For information call:
STATE PARKS	800-777-0369
P. O. Box 942896	916-653-6995, outside the U.S.
Sacramento, CA	711, TTY relay service
94296-0001	

www.parks.ca.gov

Lake Oroville
State Recreation Area
400 Glen Drive
Oroville, CA 95966
(530) 538-2200

*After the springtime
snow runoff, take a trip
up the middle fork of the
Feather River to see the
spectacular 640-foot
Feather Falls. When the
lake is high, you can boat
to within a quarter-mile
of the falls.*





Lake Oroville State Recreation Area is

located on the Feather River, about 75 miles north of Sacramento, in the chaparral-oak-pine belt of the northern mother lode country. It was created by the construction of the Oroville Dam, at 770 feet the nation's tallest earthen dam. Lake Oroville is the largest state water facility in northern California.

The seasons dictate the lake's varied climate. Summer temperatures at the lower elevations range from 85 to 100 degrees and from 60 to 70 degrees in the evenings. It is cooler year-round at the higher elevations, with winter temperatures ranging from about 30 degrees to the mid-50s. Annual rainfall ranges from about 26 inches near the Thermalito Forebay to about 60 inches at higher elevations. Spring summons a vivid array of wildflowers, and fall is usually mild, with pleasant days and cooler evenings.

NATIVE PEOPLE

For thousands of years, this area was home to the Northwest Maidu people. A typical village might consist of a few families, or it might have 500 or more inhabitants. Often there was a "main" village with sweathouses and other common-use ceremonial buildings. The Maidu were hunters and gatherers. Acorns were their main food source, and nutritional variety came from large and small game, nuts, berries, seeds, and fish from what is now the Feather River. In 1820 Captain Luis Arguello was exploring the area and named the river *Río de las Plumas* (River of Feathers) because he saw what appeared to

be large numbers of feathers floating on its surface.

The lives of the Maidu were stable and secure until the 1848 gold discovery. When the Feather River was found to be rich in gold, entrepreneurs and gold seekers flooded into the area and established several small mining towns (most are now under the lake). One of these towns—a tent city named Ophir—became the present city of Oroville. The newcomers also brought a host of diseases to which the native people had no resistance. Today about 2,500 Maidu people live in the area on rancherias, including those at Oroville and Chico.



Aerial view of Oroville Dam

THE DAM

Lake Oroville was created by the Oroville Dam in 1967 after five years of construction. The lake conserves water distributed by the State Water Project to homes, farms, and industries in the San Francisco Bay area, the San Joaquin Valley, and Southern California.

Oroville's facilities provide flood control, smog-free generation of electric power, and recreation. At its maximum elevation of 900 feet above sea level, the lake includes some 15,500 surface acres for recreation and 167 miles of shoreline. Recreation areas around the lake allow boaters to land at any point to explore the surrounding country.

WILDLIFE

An abundant and varied wildlife population resides in the vicinity of Lake Oroville. Resident species include raccoons, turkeys, opossums, coyotes, tree and ground squirrels, rabbits, deer, skunks, ring-tailed cats, and many kinds of birds that are native to the area. Check with local ranger staff about hunting regulations.



Coyote

THE VISITOR CENTER

A visitor center complex atop Kelly Ridge features interpretive displays, an audio-visual room with on-request videos about the dam and surrounding area showing throughout each day, and a 47-foot viewing tower overlooking the lake and dam. To reach the visitor center, continue up Oroville Dam Boulevard beyond the dam turnoff, or take Kelly Ridge Road off the Olive Highway. Restrooms are located in the building.

RECREATION

Lake Oroville offers a wide variety of outdoor activities, including camping, boat-in camping, floating campsites, picnicking, horse camping and horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, sail and power boating, waterskiing, fishing and swimming. For a map of the trail system, call park headquarters (530) 538-2200.

CAMPING

Reservations are recommended from late spring through Labor Day. Reserve campsites as much as seven months in advance by calling (800) 444-7275.

Loafer Creek—Each of the 137 sites at the Coyote Campground has parking, a table and stove, and can accommodate trailers up to 31 feet and campers or motorhomes up to 40 feet (no hookups). Drinking water and buildings with restrooms, coin-operated showers and laundry tubs are nearby. A sanitation station for self-contained RVs is available. Six group sites accommodate up to 25 persons each, with a maximum of eight vehicles per site. A horse camp features 15 campsites, a restroom with showers, a corral and a horse tethering and feeding station. Large groups may reserve more than one site. A launch ramp is also available.

Bidwell Canyon—Each of these 75 sites, which accommodate trailers up to 31 feet and campers or motorhomes up to 40 feet, has hookups. A launch ramp is available. These year-round facilities include a lakeside marina with a store, snack bar, fuel dock, boat rental and a pumping station for boat holding tanks.

Spillway—Shaded picnic sites and overnight camping for self-contained RVs are located at the north end of the dam. Drive across Oroville Dam to reach these facilities, which include a launch ramp and restrooms.

Lime Saddle—Both the hookup and non-hookup sites at this campground accommodate RVs. Nearby is a five-lane launch ramp, picnic facilities and restrooms. A marina offers boat docking, gas and oil, fishing boat rentals, boating supplies and a snack bar.



One of the lake's floating campsites

FLOATING CAMPSITES

You will need your own boat to reach the ten 20' x 24' floating sites. Each site accommodates up to 15 people and has a camp table, sink, propane barbecue grill (the park provides the propane), a food locker, a lockable closet, an accessible restroom, a covered living area, an upper sun deck/sleeping area and room for tents. Bring your own drinking water. For reservations call (800) 444-7275.

BOAT-IN CAMPS

Boat-in camping is first come, first served and is allowed only in designated campsites

identified by signs at the beach area around the lake. Obtain directions to your camp at the park entrance station or the launching area. Each camp has six to twenty-six individual campsites. **Craig Saddle**, east of the spillway, is behind an island-like land mass and can be reached from the Middle and South Forks of the Feather River. **Foreman Point** is on the northeast side of the main lake body, north of Foreman Island. Other boat-in camps are at **Goat Ranch** (near the junction of the West Branch and the North Fork of the Feather River) and the **Bloomer Primitive Area** at Bloomer Point, Bloomer Knoll, Bloomer Cove and Bloomer Group Camp.

Bloomer Group Camp can be reserved by calling (800) 444-7375. This camp accommodates groups of up to 75 people. Each site has pit toilets, garbage cans, and a table and stove, but no drinking water—please bring your own.

PICNICKING AND OTHER DAY USE

North Forebay—is reserved exclusively for sailboats, canoes, and other non-motorized boats. The shaded, grass-covered day-use areas have barbecue stoves and picnic tables. Four covered shade ramadas can be reserved for picnic groups. A 200-yard sandy swimming beach is available, and there are dressing rooms for both men and women. Piped drinking water and restrooms are nearby.

South Forebay—has a launch ramp, paved parking and restrooms. Drinking water is not available. Power-boating and fishing are

the main attractions in this area.

Loafer Creek Area—has a swim beach and lawn area with 100 picnic sites.

Overnight Boating—Overnight boating is permitted, but boats must have self-contained sanitary facilities, and all waste and water outlets must be sealed. State Park rangers will inspect your boat before you launch.

Boat Mooring—Mooring is permitted anywhere on the lake except for the two marinas and the area south of a line between Potter Point and the Highway 162 bridge. Camping on shore while boating is not permitted except in the boat-in campsites, but boaters are welcome to go ashore for day use.



The fishing is great year-round.

FISHING

Rainbow trout, large- and small-mouth bass, and occasional German brown, catfish, or salmon are among the catches here. Fishing is permitted year round, and a California sport fishing license is required for all anglers over age 16. Check at the visitor center for “Slot Limit” regulations for black

bass. Both shore and boat fishing are permitted in the North and South Forebays. Fishing and boating are not allowed in swimming areas.

SWIMMING

The Loafer Creek Area and the North Forebay are the only designated swimming areas at Lake Oroville. No lifeguard service is available.

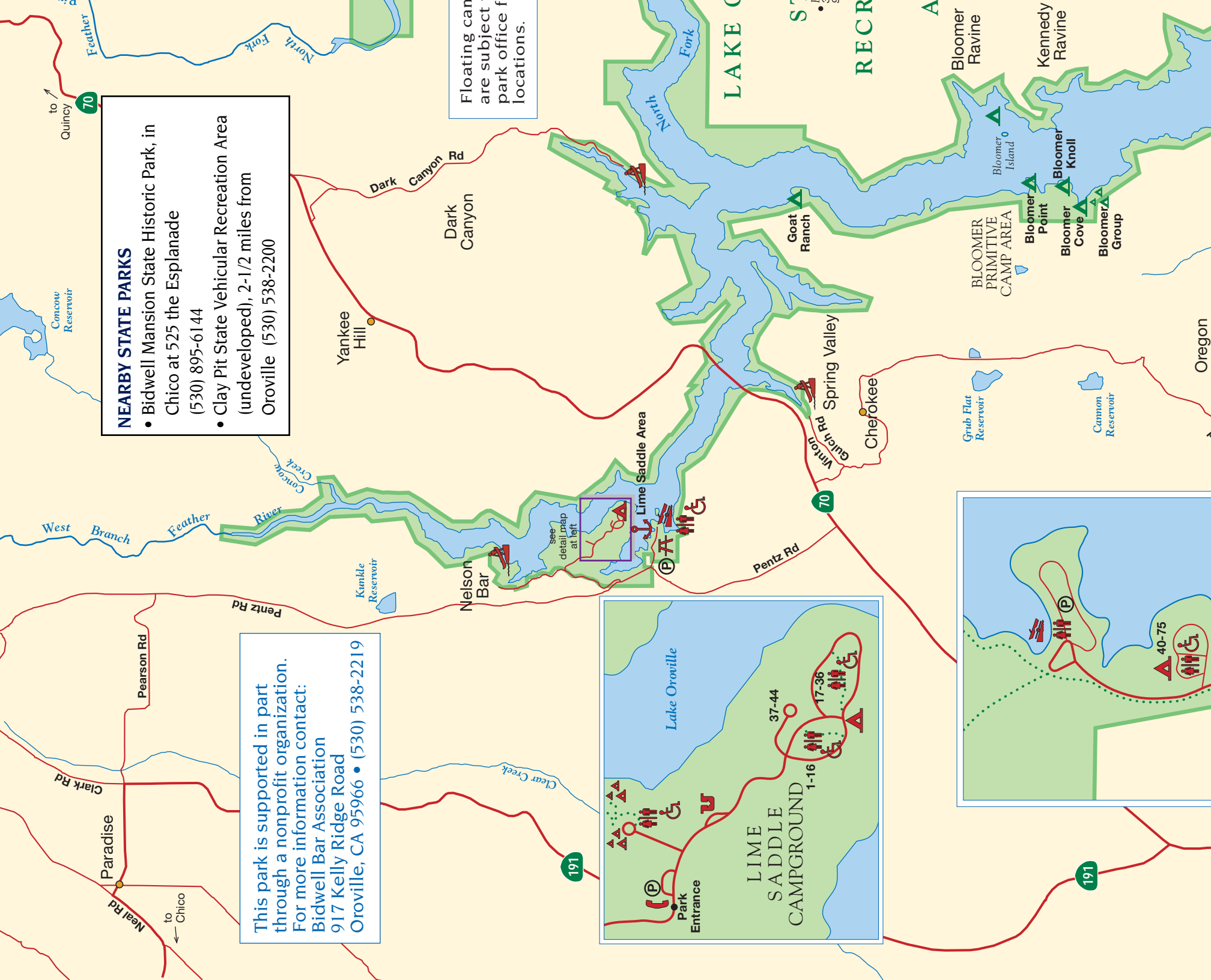
PLEASE REMEMBER

- **Boating Tips**—Floating logs and other driftwood are boating hazards, especially during winter and spring, when heavy rains wash dangerous debris into the lake.
- **Speed Limits**—The speed limit is five miles per hour within 100 feet of a swimmer or 200 feet of any shore, boat launching facility, or designated mooring area. Waterskiing is not permitted in the narrow upper reaches of the lake's tributaries.
- **Night Boating**—Only boats equipped with the proper running lights may use the lake at night. The speed limit is five miles per hour.
- **Securing Boats**—If you leave your boat to go ashore, be sure to tie it up securely.
- **Lake Level**—The lake level fluctuates daily throughout the year—lower in summer and fall, higher in winter and spring. This change in surface level also changes the location of shoals near the shore—be alert to fluctuating hazard conditions.
- **Dumping**—The dumping of waste or refuse in the lake is strictly prohibited. Floating restrooms have been placed at strategic locations.

THE FEATHER RIVER FISH HATCHERY

Across the river from the city of Oroville is a salmon and steelhead hatchery built by the Department of Water Resources and operated by the Department of Fish and Game. Underwater windows permit close-up viewing of the fish during the spawning season.

- **Boating Rules**—Become familiar with boating rules and regulations. Obtain a booklet entitled *The ABCs of California Boating Law* from the Department of Boating and Waterways or at any park entrance or marina.
- **Fires and Fuel**—In the summer fire conditions are extreme—fires and smoking are permitted only in designated sites or areas. Call 911 to report any fire you discover, or contact the nearest park employee.
- **Firewood**—Dead wood is a normal part of the park's ecology, and its collection and use are prohibited. Purchase firewood at the park entrance. Use gas-fueled camp stoves in designated camping or day-use areas.
- **Driftwood**—It is not part of the area's natural ecology, so driftwood can be collected and used for fuel. It can be found in the lake and its tributaries or ashore between the actual lake level and the high-water mark.

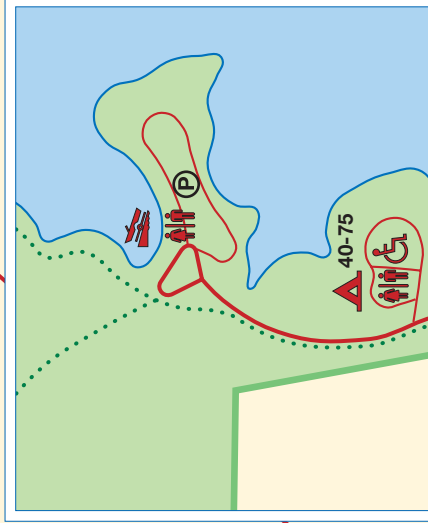
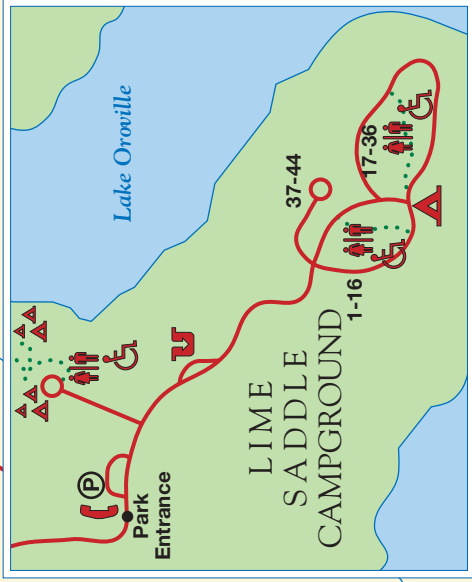


NEARBY STATE PARKS

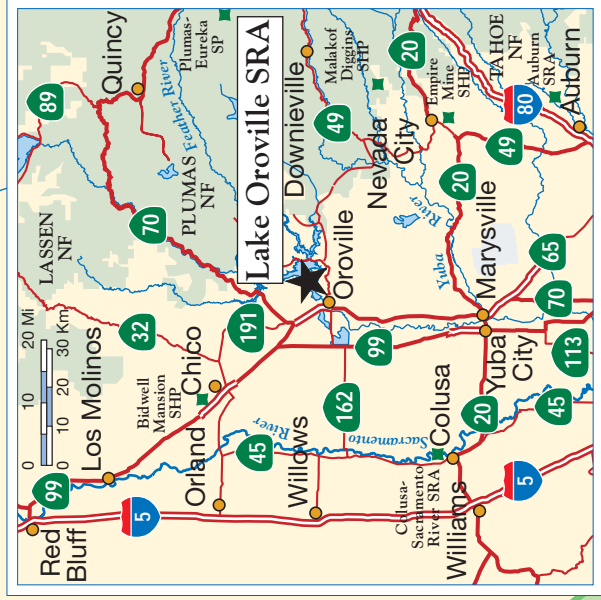
- Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park, in Chico at 525 the Esplanade (530) 895-6144
- Clay Pit State Vehicular Recreation Area (undeveloped), 2-1/2 miles from Oroville (530) 538-2200

This park is supported in part through a nonprofit organization. For more information contact:
Bidwell Bar Association
917 Kelly Ridge Road
Oroville, CA 95966 • (530) 538-2219

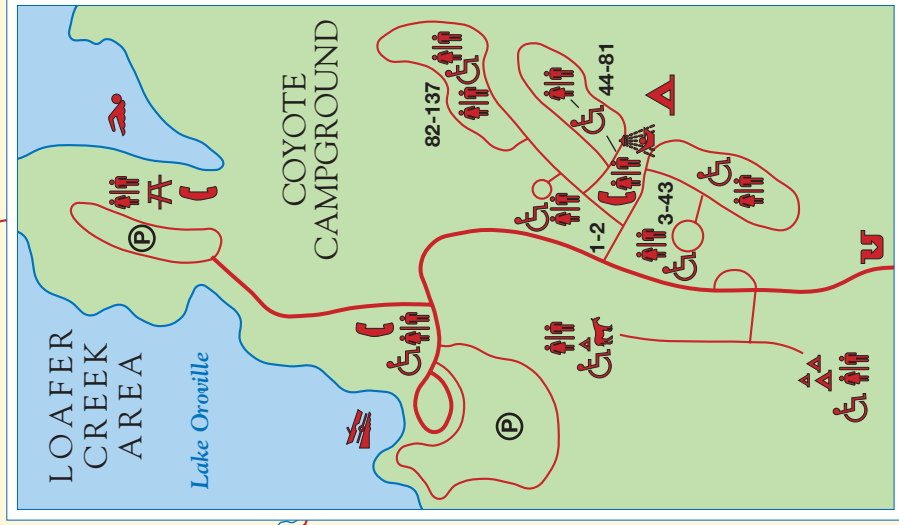
Floating canoes are subject to park office for locations.



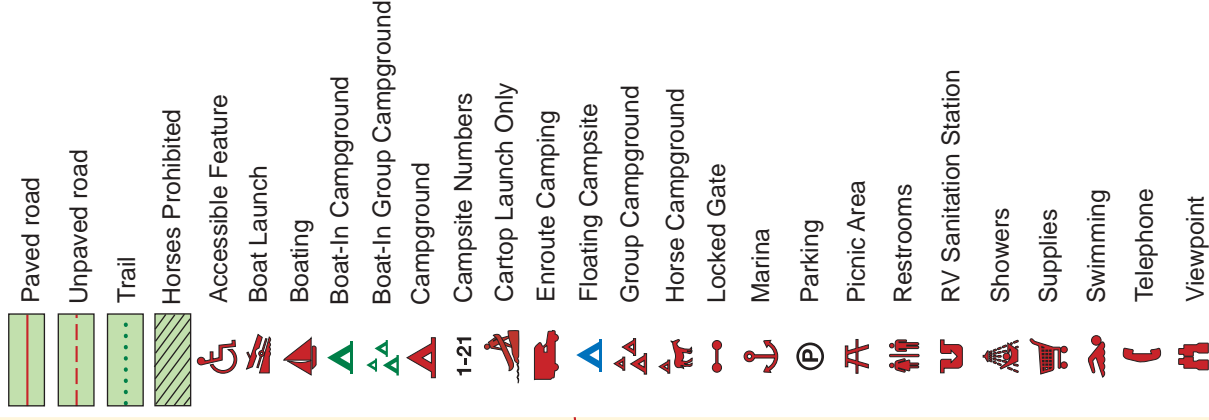




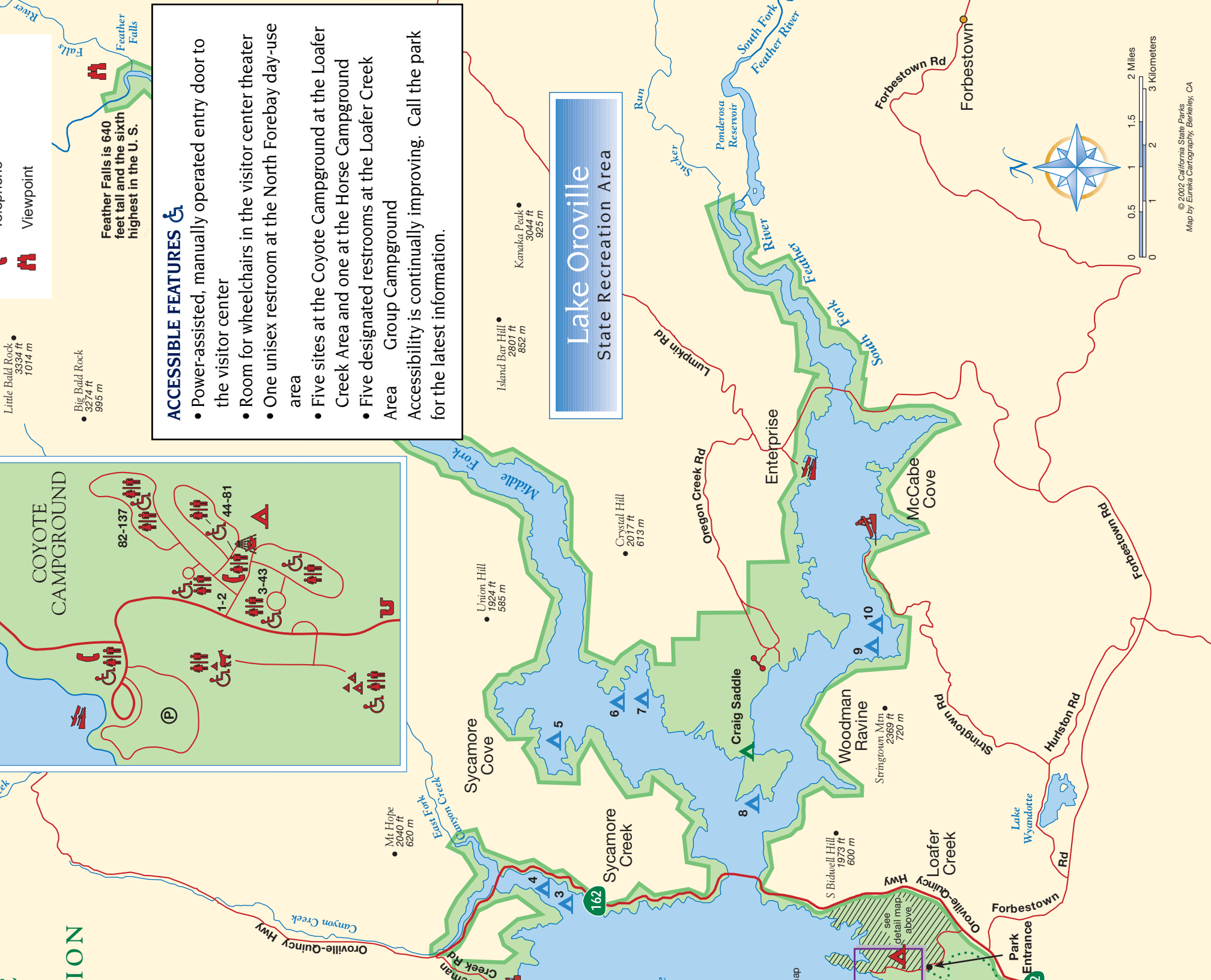
locations
nge. Call
ent



Legend



Feather Falls is 640 feet tall and the sixth highest in the U. S.



ACCESSIBLE FEATURES &

- Power-assisted, manually operated entry door to the visitor center
- Room for wheelchairs in the visitor center theater
- One unisex restroom at the North Forebay day-use area
- Five sites at the Coyote Campground at the Loafer Creek Area and one at the Horse Campground
- Five designated restrooms at the Loafer Creek Area Group Campground

Accessibility is continually improving. Call the park for the latest information.

Lake Oroville State Recreation Area